



*Photograph by Steve Dunwell*

### **Old State House and the Site of the Boston Massacre**

Beginning with its construction in 1713, the Old State House (also known as Boston’s “Towne House”) was the headquarters of British government in Boston and the center of all political life and debate in colonial Boston. The building with its distinctive cupola was once the tallest and most impressive building in the town, sending the message that there was no higher authority than the king.

From this balcony the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence was given to the people of Boston in 1776. The lion and the unicorn on the building, which are symbols of the British Crown, were removed by revolutionaries during the independence celebrations and burned in a bonfire. Now, Old State is the oldest surviving public building in Boston, housing a museum of Boston history operated by the Bostonian Society. It houses a suit of clothes worn by John Hancock and the wool flag with nine red and white stripes that was flown to assemble the Sons of Liberty under Liberty Tree. In 1882 during restoration, replicas of the lion and the unicorn were put back in place.

On the way out of the Old State House, there is a ring of cobblestones marking the site of the Boston Massacre that unfolded in 1770, when British troops fired into a mob of 60, killing five including Crispus Attucks, the first African-American to die in the Revolution. Paul Revere’s engraving of this event, entitled “Bloody Massacre Perpetrated in King Street,” is one of the most famous (and inaccurate) pieces of revolutionary propaganda. This event helped to fuel the spirit of rebellion in the Colonies.

# *Discretely Presented Component Unit Financial Statements*

## **Faneuil Hall**

The “Cradle of Liberty,” Faneuil Hall was the site of many fiery town meetings. Wealthy merchant Peter Faneuil built it in 1742 and gave it to the town as a gift. Faneuil Hall has served as an open forum-meeting hall and marketplace for more than 250 years.

The first floor served as a marketplace for the local townspeople to sell their goods. The second floor housed the town meeting hall. Here, Bostonians protested the taxation policies of the British Empire and set the doctrine of “no taxation without representation.” It was here on November 5, 1773, that John Hancock and other Bostonians held the first of the tea meetings to discuss the fate of that “baneful weed.” Famous abolitionists Wendell Phillips, William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglas all spoke here.

It was enlarged in 1806 by Charles Bulfinch. A grasshopper weather vane built in 1742 sits on top of the meeting hall. It measures 52 inches and weighs 38 pounds and is one of the best known and best loved symbols of the City of Boston. Today, it is a vibrant marketplace and tourist destination. The first floor houses restaurants and shops and the second floor is a meeting hall where many Boston City debates are held. The Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, the oldest militia organization in the country, maintains a museum on the fourth floor.

